

Statement of Purpose

"Faith into Action: A Study Guide for Christian Peacemakers" was written for the N.C. Yearly Meeting Peace Committee by Mack Arrington, Clark Harper, Seth Hinshaw, Samuel Levering, Phyllis Noah, Jeff Sebens and Marietta Wright. The 13-week Sunday school lesson was completed in February, 1985.

It is the Peace Committee's belief that all Christians are called to be peacemakers and that in our atomic age, this call could not be more important. The lesson series seeks to discover the common bonds that unite us all in the goals of peacemaking, and to study the Biblical basis for such action.

The lesson generally speaks to the level of Quaker adults and can be used in any of their classes.

Faith into Action

A Program on
Christian Peacemaking

Written by
N.C. Yearly Meeting of Friends
Peace Committee

Contributors:
Mack Arrington
Clark Harper
Seth Hinshaw
Samuel Levering
Phyllis Noah
Jeff Sebens
Marietta Wright

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LESSON 1

BIBLE LESSON

Numbers 6:26 "The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace."

Colossians 3:15 "And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body."

John 14:25-27 "These things I have spoken to you, while I am still with you.

26 "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

27 "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you, not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."

BACKGROUND

In the book of Numbers, this blessing of peace is given to Moses as the laws of the Levites are established. The verses leading up to it describe Israel's camp in the wilderness and the various stations and duties of the Levites.

The verse in Colossians refers to an ultimate spiritual peace which goes even beyond any individual's inner tranquility. It is a peace given to the community of all believers.

In the negative sense, peace is the absence of hostility and conflict. In the New Testament, however, the word carries a wider definition. This more positive meaning is used in the context of Christian faith and experience.

The fourteenth chapter of John refers to Jesus' parting message at the Last Supper just before he leaves for Gethsemane.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. In your daily life, how do you find your spiritual peace?
2. Do you think your quest for "peace of mind" or your own spiritual peace can be led into the community with which you fellowship?
3. What steps do you use in building spiritual peace that could be applied to the same in a community? Examples are the development of a code of conduct, goodwill, or discipline.

COMMENTARY

Peace is not so much a human desire as it is a promised destiny in the Old Testament prophesy and the New Testament Gospel. But how shall we define "peace"?

In a theological sense, it can be broadly seen as a general harmony between God and his creation—including fellow human beings.

John Woolman wrote: "There is a principle which is pure, placed in the human mind, which in different places and ages has different names. It is, however, pure and proceeds from God. It is deep and inward, confined to no forms of religion nor excluded from any, where the heart stands in perfect sincerity. In whomsoever this takes root and grows, of what nation soever, they become brethren in the best sense of the expression."

When we think of that "principle" which transcends all the places and ages of history, one might assume this to be an individual human experience. We read of mystics and ancients achieving a mysterious inner peace—mind over matter. Everybody seems to seek an inner peace, whether on a secular level or a spiritual level.

Sleep, rest, vacation, relaxation techniques, and stress management are the pursuit of a physical peace. Religion, however, offers a deeper peace which is spiritual. Jesus offers this perfect spiritual peace to Christians: "My peace I give to you—not as the world gives do I give to you." (John 14:27).

This deeper spiritual peace is the inner peace sought by Christians. It is found, often with difficulty, in a world in which evil competes: "...for the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. But the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few." (Matthew 7:13-14)

A spiritual peace requires Christian discipline. It is a growing process that is enhanced by worship, faith, and the rewards of stewardship.

Such a spiritual peace may never be perfected in a lifetime. Yet one has a lifetime to work upon Christ's offer. And each step yields greater and greater rewards.

In the opening lessons of *Faith into Action*, more than one definition of peace will seem to be presented. Does this mean that peace is not a single virtue but a number of different abstractions?

We do not think so. Peace is more like something embedded in a many-faceted crystal which can be viewed from many aspects. In this case, that crystal is a goal we call peace.

The peacemaker, then, must be aware of and able to understand the different aspects in order to realize that goal. There are short-term aspects as well as long-term. And there are many people working on the goal at one time, each seeing a different aspect. When all the points of view can be understood, the peacemaker can lead rather than hinder his friends' actions.

NEXT LESSON: SOCIAL AND PUBLIC PEACE

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BIBLE LESSON

Philippians 4:7 "And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

II Corinthians 13:11 "Finally, brethren, farewell. Mend your ways, heed my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you."

Romans 13:1-5 "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.

2 "Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.

3 "For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of him who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval,

4 "for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain; he is the servant of God to execute his wrath on the wrongdoer.

5 "Therefore one must be subject, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience."

BACKGROUND

In the Bible, the word *peace* describes three quite different conditions. The passage from Philippians describes spiritual peace, which exists within a person to the degree that that person is in harmony with God the Creator and Jesus Christ the Savior.

The passage from Corinthians describes *social* peace, which means unity, without serious conflict, within groups of people.

The passage from Romans describes *public* peace, where a community or a nation settles its disputes and conflicts and makes necessary changes by peaceful means without major bloodshed. This is based on law, including at least two of the Ten Commandments, "Thou shalt not kill" and "Thou shalt not steal." This law and order operates with courts and police. Paul says that God establishes the institution of civil government.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Conflict can (and often does) lead to violence and bloodshed. How

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- can this be prevented or kept to a minimum: In families? In churches? In communities and nations? Between nations?
2. Is complete absence of conflict possible: In families? In churches? In communities and nations? Between nations?
 3. Are Christians called to work for *all three* kinds of peace?
 4. What is required if public peace is to be established and maintained?

COMMENTARY

God wishes human beings to have all three kinds of peace. Spiritual peace is central. The chief purpose of the Christian Church is to help bring this kind of peace into the hearts and lives of individuals. Social peace, unity and harmony in families, churches, and other groups of human beings are also very important. But public peace and the prevention of war are essential—particularly now that nuclear weapons in a major war could destroy civilization as we know it and kill countless human beings. Such destruction would be the ultimate sin. The very survival of the human race may well be at stake.

Human selfishness, and the sin and evil which result from it, gets in the way of establishing and maintaining all three kinds of peace. Individual persons want material goods, power, and position, often at the expense of others. They then kill, rob, lie, and do other evil things to get what they want. (James 4:1-2).

How can society deal with such selfishness and evil deeds? One way is for the power of God to remove the desire to do such things. Sometimes acts of kindness and love by others can lead to transformation into Christian lives, but God himself transforms the life.

What does public peace require? First, most people must want peace rather than major violence and war. Those who are true followers of Christ want peace, because they could not carry on their work or even stay alive if there was too much bloodshed and war. Fortunately, self-interest often coincides with what is right in establishing and maintaining peace.

Second, people in the community or nation must feel common interests which bind them together more strongly than they feel the issues which divide them. There must also be enough justice for most people so that they find the present situation tolerable or have hopes of improvement.

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Social and Public Peace

The third requirement of public peace, as indicated above, is law and the institutions of law and order—courts and civilian police to enforce the law. Anarchy does not work, and not even semi-civilized society would attempt to get along without law and the institutions to assure that it is enforced.

NEXT LESSON: THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR PUBLIC PEACEMAKING

LESSON 3

The Biblical Basis for Public Peacemaking

BIBLE LESSON

Matthew 5:9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."

Exodus 20:13-15 "You shall not kill.

14 "You shall not commit adultery.

15 "You shall not steal."

Amos 5:12, 21, 24 "For I know how many are your transgressions, and how great are your sins—you who afflict the righteous, who take a bribe, and turn aside the needy in the gate. . . .

21 "I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. . . .

24 "But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream."

Matthew 5:43-44 "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'

44 "But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

BACKGROUND

Matthew 5:9 is a beatitude from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Peacemakers are among those named especially blessed and are given the designation as children of God. There could be no higher praise.

This passage from Exodus gives three of the Ten Commandments which the Lord gave to Moses to be binding law on the children of Israel. This law was spelled out in detail in the other Books of Law, Leviticus and Deuteronomy, including penalties for violations.

In this passage from Amos, the prophet again cries out for justice for the poor and oppressed.

Matthew 5:43-44 defines divine love in attitudes and actions toward one's enemies.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How did the Lord reveal the requirements of public peace to the children of Israel from the time of Moses to the time of the life and teachings of Jesus?
2. Does either the United States or the Soviet Union have effective military defense against attack with nuclear weapons?

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The Biblical Basis for Public Peacemaking

3. We in the United States enjoy public peace: we have good people, goodwill, shared common interests, enough justice to make conditions tolerable for most people, and law peacefully enforced. Under this regime of peaceful law, neither individuals, nor groups, nor states have the right to possess weapons endangering the nation. Which of these conditions are lacking among the peoples of the world? What can be done to provide for the missing requirements?

COMMENTARY

The Lord in dealing with the children of Israel first gave them law through Moses and the Ten Commandments. Without these laws they could not have existed as a nation. Even so, laws were not enough, so He sent Amos and Joel and other prophets to stress the importance of justice. They also were not sufficiently effective. The Lord had to send his son, Jesus Christ, to demonstrate in human form what divine love really means when put in practice by human beings.

Public peace requires the same things to establish and maintain peace anywhere. The requirements are common interests and enough justice to make conditions tolerable for most people, peacefully enforced law, the operation of courts to settle disputes, and police to enforce this law peacefully.

Some countries do not have these requirements. In some developing nations, there is not enough common interest or justice to prevent civil war. Often a few families are said to own half the property, and the rest of the millions of people cannot meet their minimum needs on the other half of the property.

Nations continue to seek peace and security through piling up their weapons, claiming the right to arm as they please with nuclear weapons of vast destructive power, and using these weapons as they please. No law prevents this build up and nations are not required to submit disputes and conflicts to courts or other unbiased third parties for settlement. There is no international police to enforce anything. In other words, anarchy rules.

At the world level, establishment of effective law to prevent nations from having armaments which endanger other nations, requirements of peaceful settlement of conflicts and disputes, and prevention of the use of national arms to attack other nations are essential to quickly prevent

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The Biblical Basis for Public Peacemaking

nuclear war.

Only a small degree of goodwill and love is present in our world, compared to the vast amount of armaments. While nations spend more than 700 billion dollars a year on preparation for war, millions of people die from starvation and malnutrition. An effective system of world law would protect nations from war and would allow large amounts of resources now used for war to be used to help the poorest nations meet the needs of their people.

NEXT LESSON: PEACE AND ORDER THROUGHOUT THE BIBLE

LESSON 4

BIBLE LESSON

1 Samuel 15:2-3 "Thus says the Lord of hosts, 'I will punish what Amalek did to Israel in opposing them on the way, when they came up out of Egypt.

3 "Now go and smite Amalek and utterly destroy all that they have; do not spare them, but kill both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."

Exodus 21:23-24 "If any harm follows, then you shall give life for life,

24 "eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot."

Matthew 5:46 "For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?"

BACKGROUND

During the Exodus from Egypt, the Hebrew People had been attacked by a group of nomads called the Amalekites in the wilderness south of Judea. Now Samuel, acting as prophet, gives Saul divine instructions to wage a holy war on the Amalekites, an act of unlimited retaliation. This act would, of course, also secure Judean support of Saul's reign.

The "Book of the Covenant" was the laws set down following the Ten Commandments. They were used to establish law and order in the Hebrew nation. The familiar ones we see in this excerpt of Exodus refer to bodily assault and murder. The book of laws also covers a wide range of actions—from bribery and lending to humane treatment of animals.

In Matthew 5:46 is Jesus referring to the Golden Rule? If so, it suggests that doing unto others with the hope that they will reciprocate may be a limiting type of love. Jesus presses his disciples to do good even to those who offer only persecution.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is the main purpose of the law or commandments of God?
2. In North Carolina, what works best to bring about peace and order: Having a good police system to enforce just laws, or arming everybody with a gun for his own protection?
3. What are your attitudes about maintaining peace and order? What are

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your actions? Is there room for improvement?

COMMENTARY

The Garden of Eden was supposedly a very beautiful place. Adam and Eve lived there in relative comfort. The rule was plain: Do not eat from the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil." Even this early in Biblical history, mankind just would not listen—Adam and Eve took of the forbidden fruit and thereby lost the comfort and security they enjoyed in the Garden of Eden.

Life on the outside of the Garden was not so easy. The law of the land (or lack of it) was that of *unlimited retaliation*: might makes right. If someone uprooted your rosebush, you uprooted his whole garden. If someone killed your dog, you proceeded to kill his goat. He killed your goat, so you killed his ox—and so on, until there would be little left to kill or destroy. God was not happy with the situation in this era, and some changes were inevitable.

Mankind experienced many changes after being evicted from the Garden, and eventually the laws of *limited retaliation* and *limited love* were introduced. The law of limited retaliation required a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and so on. In this form of justice, you can get even, but do nothing more. Retaliation must be limited to the exact amount of injury. For example, if someone uprooted one of your rose bushes, then you were permitted by law to uproot one of his. You were, however, no longer allowed to uproot the whole garden, even if you were able.

The law of limited love said to love thy neighbor, and hate thy enemy. This set two standards of dealing with people. On the one hand, a fellow Jew could be forgiven for uprooting the rosebush, i.e., "Love thy neighbor." On the other hand, the Moabites, Ammonites, and the like would be prosecuted to the full extent of the law, that being the "hate thy enemy" thing to do. This attitude was at least a beginning of learning how to love, forgive, and live peacefully together. Generally, countries today have constructed a system of peace and order within themselves. But between countries, a war system of unlimited retaliation is often in effect.

Jesus came with the law of *unlimited love*: love thy neighbor and also

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love thy enemies. This law does not sound like the most practical one to follow. It is like saying that if someone uproots your rosebush, you will not only give him the rose bush but also help to plant it in his yard. Jesus did not talk of how practical this was, or how much we could lose. He talked of doing this that we may become children of our Father in heaven. It is a way of learning to love as God loves. God does not limit loving to certain groups. God loves universally regardless of whether he is loved in return.

The development of law in the Bible can be seen to follow a progression from unlimited retaliation to unlimited love. Each step leads toward perfection or maturity in loving. The main purpose of the law was to get people to "love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" and "love thy neighbor as thyself." Jesus said that he did not come to destroy the law but to fulfill the purpose of the law. We must work to see how we can translate an orderly community into an orderly world.

NEXT LESSON: QUAKERS AND PUBLIC PEACEMAKING

LESSON 5

BIBLE LESSON

Micah 6:8 "What does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

Isaiah 1:16-17 "Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to evil,

17 "learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow."

Matthew 5:44-45 "But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

45 "so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."

Matthew 7:12 "So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them;"

BACKGROUND

The statement in Micah on God's basic requirement of justice is similarly expressed in the first chapter of Isaiah, in the fifth chapter of Amos, and in many other places in the Old Testament.

Isaiah pleads for justice based on compassionate caring. In this way he provides an Old Testament background for the teaching of Jesus in the New Testament.

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus explicitly and clearly teaches that evil must be overcome with good. Paul emphasizes this fact in Romans 12:21. This principle holds true in national and international relationships as well as in personal affairs.

The Golden Rule as stated in Matthew 7:12 expresses an everyday guide to personal conduct. There are no exceptions for persons of other races and national origins. Everyone desires the three essentials of justice, respect, and love. Nations as well as individuals desire justice, respect, and positive goodwill.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. If justice is necessary for peaceful relationships, personal and international, who must take the initiative in establishing it? What problems arise when nations as well as individuals proceed upon the

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- basis of immediate self-interest?
2. What are some of the means and methods of bringing compassionate good will into public and international relationships?
 3. Are the various teachings in the Sermon on the Mount directed primarily toward personal relationships? A great many people contend that these ideals "just won't work" on the national and international level. What does the Society of Friends have to say at this point?

COMMENTARY

William Penn was a great peacemaker, not only in the sense of conflict resolution, but also in the sense of preventing the kind of injustice which naturally leads into conflict situations. As with all human ills, prevention is better than cure.

In William Penn's frame of government for Pennsylvania, perhaps the most basic concept is a fundamental respect for the dignity and the value of all individuals, Indians no less than whites. With this premise established, a great many other things followed, such as the essential quality of life and the rights of all people.

William Penn sought to establish justice under law. Minimal force to maintain the law was used—but not force to wage war. Preventing conflict situations through orderly process of just law is one of the highest forms of peacemaking. In this regard, Penn stands as the great example and leader in colonial America.

The establishment of religious liberty in Pennsylvania promoted peaceable relationships among people with different religious beliefs and practices. "No person . . . in this province . . . shall in any case be molested or prejudiced for his or her conscientious persuasion or practice . . ."

The Pennsylvania frame of government recognized the rights of all individuals. Penn said, "We put the power in the people." The Founding Fathers of our nation carefully studied Penn's frame of government when writing the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Today all Americans benefit.

Far ahead of his times, William Penn proposed a union of the American colonies, not for the purpose of waging war, but of promoting friendly and peaceable relationships. This again was peacemaking

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through the prevention of conflict situations. Penn also proposed a United Nations of Europe. This union did not materialize, and horrible wars have ensued.

In 1681 Penn wrote to the Indians: "I desire to win and gain your love and friendship by a kind, just and peaceful life." Some historians say that Penn's policies in dealing with the Indians did not work. A more realistic statement is that his policies of justice and kindness were the only policies which did work.

Indeed, there were no wars with the Indians during the Quaker experiment. This situation is unparalleled in all of the European settlement of America.

Penn was a prime example of Quaker action that continued to be fruitful into contemporary times. After World War I, the American Friends Service Committee provided relief in war-torn Germany. Such a mission of goodwill even made an impression on Adolph Hitler: Before the second world war, Rufus Jones and other Quakers were able to win the release of thousands of Jewish prisoners.

Prominent Quakers today are making significant strides in the pursuit of world peace and international order. For example, since 1972, Sam and Miriam Levering, from North Carolina Yearly Meeting of Friends, have been deeply involved in the International Law of the Sea Convention.

United States Ambassador Elliott Richardson called this convention "the most significant single event in the history of law and peaceful cooperation among nations since the creation of the United Nations" which followed World War II.

The Law of the Sea Treaty proposed by this convention provides an equitable agreement for sharing three fifths of the world's surface—namely, the sea. A miracle seemed to have evolved when 150 nations agreed on 400 articles of this treaty. Such work has provided the practical model for a World Security Treaty which will be described in a later lesson.

George Fox said, "I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion for all wars." This statement could have well been made by William Penn and the other prominent Quaker peacemakers.

NEXT LESSON: THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY

BIBLE LESSON

John 15:12, 14-15 "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

14 "You are my friends if you do what I command you.

15 "No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing—but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you."

Matthew 5:43-44 "You have heard that it was said You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.

44 "But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

Matthew 26:52 "Then Jesus said to him, Put your sword back into its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword."

BACKGROUND

"I have called you friends" is the source for the name of the Religious Society of Friends. These were the enlightening ideas that Jesus shared with the disciples on the way to Gethsemane, ideas of love and faith and observance of Commandments.

Hating one's enemy may be suggested in the Old Testament referring to dealings with Israel's enemies or in parts of the Psalms. Nevertheless, we see that Jesus clearly forbids this hate. The Sermon on the Mount reveals this attitude.

In the latter chapter of Matthew, we see the multitude from the high priests and elders come to arrest Jesus after Judas has betrayed him. Peter draws his sword in a vain effort to fight off the servants of the high priest. Jesus counsels him against fighting and using weapons. He asks, "How then should the scriptures be fulfilled that it must be so?"

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Quakers are identified for their peace testimony. Founder George Fox said that Christ's message leads us to oppose fighting and war. Do you believe that war and fighting can always be avoided?
2. Do you believe that it is always practical to love an enemy? On an individual level? Between nations?

3. What is an absolute pacifist? What is a relativist? Can peacemaking encompass a number of modes of action?

COMMENTARY

Quakers have a definite heritage of being called to peacemaking. Says Leonard Kenworthy: "One of the broadest, most powerful, and most revolutionary testimonies of the Religious Society of Friends has been—and is—its peace testimony. . . ." From where did it come?

Surely the biblical peace calling, especially in the New Testament and the Sermon on the Mount, was a source of inspiration here. Even so, no fundamental translation seems to be particularly preferred. One then senses an inward leading to the peace testimony as practiced by Quakers.

Fox and the early Friends stated the peace testimony in 1660 with the well known words: ". . . the Spirit of Christ which leads us unto all truth will never move us to fight and war against any man nor for the kingdoms of this world . . . therefore we cannot learn war any more."

As we individually take on the challenge of the Gospel in developing our own spiritual peace, Quakers have historically given us examples where an individual's private convictions and disciplines were so strong that they also made it public practice.

During the American Revolution, a prominent Quaker explained why he opposed the revolution: "All that was ever secured by revolution is not an adequate compensation for the poor mangled soldiers, and for the loss of life and limb."

Leniency toward the Quaker objection to wars varied from time to time in English and American history. Quakers suffered the most in the Southern Confederacy during the Civil War. There they were already at odds because of their anti-slavery stance. Friends were helping to move society beyond the institution of slavery then, just as they continue today to help move the world beyond war.

A positive witness by Quakers in the face of war has been seen in practically every conflict since the Society was founded. From the Irish War of 1690 throughout the American Revolution, the Crimean War, the American Civil War, the Franco-Prussian War, and the World Wars, Friends were active in relief work, help to refugees, education, and in repairing devastation. The American Friends Service Committee emerged during the years of the first World War and later was awarded

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the Nobel Peace Prize.

Howard Brinton reminds us that "the peace testimony of the Society of Friends cannot be fully understood apart from their other social testimonies." And centuries earlier, George Fox tells us that "I lived in the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars."

Again, we see a relationship between spiritual peace and public peace. It is not always a simple relationship. While all Christians have a calling to peacemaking; each individual has a special role and a call to follow in this spiritual journey of humanity. Friends, indeed, have a very special heritage of exploring these roles.

Quakers in the past have condemned and resisted war and fighting. They have abstained from violence and ministered to the suffering through relief work. Yet today, another mode of peacemaking is made particularly imperative by the nuclear age: namely, *prevention*. If a nuclear war breaks out, how useful will resistance be? How realistic will repair be? A nuclear war must not happen.

Historically, Friends can be found involved with all these modes of peacemaking. Quakers cannot be pegged to just one attitude on politics, activism, or work toward global peace.

In a 1956 address, Fredrick B. Tolles defines the two outstanding positions as the absolutist and the relativist. "And let me suggest," says Tolles, "that perhaps each needs the other. The relativist needs the absolutist to keep alive and clear the vision of the City of God. . . And conversely, the absolutist needs the relativist, lest the vision remain the possession of a few only, untranslated into any degree of reality for the world as a whole."

Quakers believing in the divine Light within each individual, must search for common paths to peace in society as a whole. They must also realize common elements that Friends as peacemakers have within themselves.

NEXT LESSON: THE ULTIMATE SIN

LESSON 7

BIBLE LESSON

Matthew 7:17, 20 "So, every sound tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears evil fruit."

20 "Thus you will know them by their fruits."

Matthew 25:40, 45 "And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.'"

45 "Then he will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.'"

I John 4:7 "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God."

BACKGROUND

Matthew 7:17, 20 notes that, just as we know a tree by its fruit, we know people by their fruit, be it good or bad, sweet or sour.

In Matthew 25:40, 45, Jesus becomes every individual in the world. He says that the evil we do, we do to him; the good we do, we do to him. In the context of Matthew 25:31-46, he also addresses attitudes of the heart and our daily interaction with each other. If we do not look to see the hungry, the stranger, the needy, then we will not see them; if we do not seek to love, then we will probably not love. Our outward lives reflect our true relationship with God, and the true Christian forgets self in service to God and mankind.

The Scripture from I John 4:7 exhorts us to love one another. Loving requires self-denial, especially for those whom we consider undesirable by our standards. In like manner, God took human form in Jesus to help us love and to help us know God.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Based on the Bible lesson, what is our responsibility as Christians to the world community?
2. Can we as Christians use the example of Jesus' suffering to focus our emotions on actions to help prevent the use of nuclear weaponry?
3. In a discussion group with high school students who were asked what they thought would be the result of nuclear war, one of them responded: "I believe God would cry." How does this statement affect you? Explain your feelings, telling why.

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COMMENTARY

The understanding of Jesus' life on earth becomes the grasp on reality for a Christian. God was all too aware of human cruelty, indeed that was why he sent His Son to earth. Jesus' humanity gave a model that helps us empathize with the worst of human afflictions. He lived his life on earth knowing that he would die on the cross, and freely gave His life that all humanity could see and understand. In Matthew 25:31-46, He made it so clear that he felt all the cruelty in the world as if it were done to Him. "As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me."

Cruelty has been a prevailing theme throughout history. Man's inhumanity to man has been thoroughly documented in the course of our literary masterpieces and in the Bible as well. From Cain and Abel, to Moses and the slave, to the crucifixion of Jesus, the cruelty of one human being to another has been all too frequent and seems to have expanded throughout history. The Crusades, the First World War, Auschwitz, and Mylai all conjure up such devastating images that our minds seem to shut down to prevent the horror from overwhelming us. If we are to keep ourselves from being caught up in a repetition of these horrors, we must at least try to comprehend what has happened and what can happen again.

At this point in history, we face the real possibility of an incomprehensible tragedy. A nuclear exchange of any size would dwarf any of mankind's previous evils. Though not yet clear whether it would mean the complete annihilation of God's creation, the magnitude of death and suffering that would occur again makes our minds shut down without full comprehension. We must identify with Jesus' words, "As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me."

Although we do not comprehend the untold suffering that could unfold, we can realize that Jesus willingly accepted all of mankind's suffering personally. He would again accept the suffering of these untold millions. This is all that we as Christians need to understand. We must find a way to use Jesus' strength and suffering to stop the utter destruction—or do we choose to crucify Jesus again?

And the problem of the current arms race is not merely what it could lead to in some cataclysmic finale to the human race, but also *what it is doing to human beings right now!* Both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. are

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bankrupting and impoverishing themselves, thus increasing the threat of poverty and hunger for the poor in our country, as well as restricting our assistance and hurting developing countries. The cost of the arms race is, and will be, paid in terms of our children dying in ignorance and poverty for generations to come, whether or not the bombs actually fall.

NEXT LESSON: THE WORLD TODAY: A VERY REAL DANGER

LESSON 8

BIBLE LESSON

Psalms 20:7 "Some boast of chariots, and some of horses; but we boast of the name of the Lord our God."

Psalms 44:6-7 "For not in my bow do I trust, nor can my sword save me.

7 "But thou hast saved us from our foes, and hast put to confusion those who hate us."

Ecclesiastes 9:18 "Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one sinner destroys much good."

Exodus 32:8 "They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them; they have made for themselves a molten calf, and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.' "

I Corinthians 10:3-4 "For though we live in the world we are not carrying on a worldly war,

4 "for the weapons of our warfare are not worldly but have divine power to destroy strongholds.

BACKGROUND

Psalms 20:7 and *44:6-7* point out that the Lord, not weapons of war, is considered foremost for defense and salvation.

Ecclesiastes 10:18 deals with wisdom and strength. Though wisdom is the better way, the sinner or the foolish can destroy that which wisdom has accomplished.

Exodus 32:8 refers to the time shortly after Israel had been led out of Egypt by Moses. Rather than trust in the one true God, they made gods out of metal and worshiped them.

I Corinthians 10:3-4 tells us that our true weapons are not made by our own hands. Our weapons include prayer, faith, and trust in God, and love and charity for all.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Nuclear wastes and contamination are spreading and killing us without nuclear weapons even being used. Third World countries with unstable governments are trying to get nuclear weapons and will have them in the near future. Continued manufacture of weapons

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- increases nuclear pollution and makes nuclear technology easier to obtain. Is it wise to continue such manufacture? Why or why not?
2. Eight thousand pounds of nuclear material is missing from U.S. facilities—it takes less than twenty pounds to make a bomb. What defense would we have against a terrorist with a nuclear bomb?
3. Weapons are meant to provide us with security and comfort. How much security and comfort do you feel with nuclear weapons? Why?
4. Do we put more faith and trust in weapons than we do in the Lord? How do the actions of you and your government support this?
5. Other nations, as mentioned in question 1, will eventually possess the knowledge and resources to build nuclear weapons. How can we prevent irresponsible fanatics and terrorists from possessing these weapons? Later lessons will help to answer this question, but your ideas are of great value.

COMMENTARY

The development and use of nuclear weapons present real dangers to our world today. One kind of danger comes from the destructive power of the weapons. The research of AFSC materials reveals facts which give us cause for reflection. The initial fireball alone of a twenty megaton weapon is about 12 miles in diameter, and the other effects can cover hundreds of square miles beyond that.

Another danger comes from accidents. In 1961, an Air Force plane crashed in North Carolina and five of six safety mechanisms on a twenty-four megaton weapon failed. Another weapon fell out of a bomber, landed in a swamp in the Carolinas, and has never been found. A Soviet airplane carrying a nuclear weapon crashed in the Sea of Japan. A U.S. defense computer gave a six-minute false alarm. (Soviet submarine-launched weapons can hit the U.S.A. in about ten minutes.) The list goes on and on. The worst accident occurred with a mistranslated message from the Japanese near the end of World War II. The message said that they were considering surrender—the translators read it as a refusal to surrender. Shortly thereafter, the U.S. dropped the first atomic bombs on Japan.

Environmental dangers include nuclear wastes and contaminated land and water. Radioactive plutonium remains poisonous for at least a half-

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million years. How can we safely store such wastes? Who knows what could happen to waste containers that would have to stay intact for a half-million years? As a result of atomic bomb tests, radioactive poisons can be detected in every person in the world. We are told by many in the medical profession that these poisons are causing cancer, premature deaths, birth defects, and other physical problems.

The greatest danger is our attitude toward the value of weapons. As people of faith, we face the danger of idolatry. Do we have more faith and trust in nuclear weapons than we do in the Lord? Our actions would indicate this possibility. We use billions of dollars and massive resources to build and maintain these weapons. It is as if we sacrifice our money, our resources, our life and health, and the needs of the poor and hungry to a nuclear god. And the only promise of this god is sudden destruction by war, accident, or a slow painful death from contamination and disease. Where is our salvation?

The dangers do not present us with a pretty picture. To disguise or discount them is not fair or safe. The responsibility now rests with those of us who want a clean and secure future for ourselves and for our children. Somebody should do something, and each one of us is somebody. The last great danger is the attitude that "I can't do anything about it." Many Quakers believe that we *can* make a difference, not only in our own destiny but in that of our world or planet Earth. Do you believe this philosophy? If so, are *you* willing to explore new ways of thinking and solving problems?

NEXT LESSON: ATTITUDES AND EAST-WEST COOPERATION

LESSON 9

are willing to work together to prevent it.

There are, indeed, ominous signs that a nuclear war is possible—that there is a greater than even chance that it could happen at our present rate of nuclear buildup. But just as sure are many examples of mankind working together, overcoming incredible barriers, discovering undreamed of routes of progress, all for our common betterment.

Albert Einstein said that the atomic bomb changed everything—that is, except our way of thinking. Will we be able to co-exist peacefully with the Soviet Union and allay a nuclear confrontation? Can we change our attitudes enough to allow peaceful coexistence? In light of human achievement to this day, the answer is almost certainly yes. The question is: can we change our attitudes soon enough?

The Friends Committee on National Legislation has published a valuable newsletter entitled "Deterrence by Fear or Friendship." One paragraph of the paper states: "Since the real arena for decision is in the human mind rather than in nuclear hardware, much of the discussion about appropriate weapons systems is misdirected. The real question is still how to deter Soviet leaders from launching an attack on the United States. Deterrence by fear is a failed policy. Can deterrence by friendship succeed?"

Jesus pointed out the challenge in the Bible, surely, when he spoke of the gates that lead to destruction being wide and easy to enter. Yet he offered the vision of the gate that leads to life and the responsibilities that we as Christian peacemakers have in entering by it.

NEXT LESSON: VISION OF A PEACEFUL WORLD

LESSON 9

COMMENTARY

Two things Jesus' example and ministry taught were: (1) We reap what we sow, and (2) We become what we think. They are two of God's universal laws which we break to our own folly.

Old Testament writers recognized the importance of thoughts forming character. Solomon states in Proverbs, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." So how do our negative thoughts of fear and hate and our reliance on armed might for our security affect our actual relations with others, especially with our so-called enemies? It only makes them more fearful of us and leads them to increase their arms build-up in hopes of defending themselves against us.

A case in point is our relationship with the Soviet Union. Where do we stand with the Soviet Union? Relations with this superpower have never been as low as they are presently. And how critical a situation this is with the overwhelming majority of nuclear weaponry—about 98 percent—equally divided between "us" and "them." Thus far we have managed to avoid any major confrontation, but how long can this last? Historically, an arms race between major powers has led to war in 23 out of 28 situations in the past century and a half.

But there is hope. Our attitude with the Eastern bloc has "warmed" and "cooled" many times in the past fifty years of U.S.-Soviet relations. Regardless of the rhetoric a citizen is exposed to, coming from the world leaders, there is no historic argument that anything is written in stone.

And, as we move toward the brink of a nuclear war, a strong incentive arises for peaceful co-existence: namely, mutual survival. There is evidence that our nations do act favorably in response to this growing threat.

Following the tense days of the Cuban missile crisis, one of the most positive steps toward common security to this day was initiated with the Limited Test Ban Treaty (1963). In 1974, the world was shocked by the explosion of a nuclear device by a country as poor as India. Both the U.S. and the Soviet Union worked together among fifteen industrial countries to tighten international safeguards and nuclear exports. Despite how superpowers justify the arms race in defense against each other, nuclear proliferation threatens both equally; and therefore, they

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BIBLE LESSON

Proverbs 12:20 "Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, but those who plan good have joy."

Philippians 4:8 "Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."

Galatians 6:7 "Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap."

BACKGROUND

The book of Proverbs is classed along with Job, Song of Solomon and Ecclesiastes as wisdom literature or poetry. It contains many wise sayings, a large number of which are attributed to Solomon, that describe man's condition and point to truths of his being. These wise sayings suggest ways to live according to God's plan.

Paul is writing from prison to the church he had founded in Philippi. That church had been loyal to him and had sent gifts to him in prison. The tone of the letter is joyful and it sets forth the positive principles of Christianity as seen in this passage.

In Galatians Paul is ringingly defending the faith. The Galatians have become weak and foolish and have strayed from the faith. He is calling them back. In the last two chapters, Paul gives practical advice on how to live ("love one another," etc.). This passage reminds us of another in Matthew, "They that take the sword will perish by the sword."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Can you cite instances when Jesus taught that our outer lives and actions proceed from our deepest inner emotions?
2. Discuss this saying: If there is righteousness in the heart, there will be beauty in the character; if there is beauty in the character, there will be harmony in the home; if there is harmony in the home, there will be order in the nation; if there is order in the nation, there will be peace in the world.
3. In what ways can we realistically and practically apply our Christian beliefs in our dealings with the Russians and other so-called enemies?

BIBLE LESSON

Micah 4:1-5 "It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised up above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it,

2 "and many nations shall come, and say: 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and we may walk in his paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

3 "He shall judge between many peoples, and shall decide for strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore;

4 "but they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken.

5 "For all the peoples walk each in the name of its god, but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever."

BACKGROUND

This famous passage prophesies the coming of durable peace on earth. It speaks of the "last days," but II Peter 4:8 says, "But beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as a day." So durable peace on earth could occur at any time.

Note that the peaceful world is established while many peoples worship gods other than the Lord (vs. 3-5). Does this not indicate that the establishment of peace will come before the second coming of Jesus Christ?

Note also that *law* (v. 2), *judgment* (peaceful settlement of conflicts), *disarmament*, and cessation of *preparation for war* are important parts of this peaceful world.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What would the achievement of Micah's vision require?
2. How would such a peaceful world be organized?
3. How does Micah's vision differ from the Peaceful Kingdom of William Penn's Quaker experiment in Pennsylvania?

4. Is the achievement of such a peaceful world possible in the near future? Is this necessary for human survival?

COMMENTARY

The ultimate Christian vision of a peaceful world would be one in which each person is fully motivated by love for all other human beings—always acts to help others, never acts to injure anyone.

But such a world has never existed, and without drastic change in all human beings, which would require Divine intervention, it is unlikely to exist.

But Christians also have an *intermediate* vision of a peaceful world. This closely resembles Micah's vision and the Quaker "Peaceful Kingdom" of William Penn, with its *laws* based on the Ten Commandments, generally obeyed and peacefully enforced (if necessary) by courts and police, with a large degree of justice for all citizens, with goodwill and affection general among citizens, and with necessary changes made by peaceful means.

This intermediate vision also closely resembles the normal situation in most present communities and nations. This peace is not static, but dynamic, changing to meet new conditions. Constant effort is needed to maintain it, to strengthen it, and to make changes to meet new conditions.

The basic requirements for this intermediate vision and for public peace are: (1) Good people and goodwill, (2) enough justice to make conditions tolerable for most people, (3) law, enforced by courts and civilian police, and also, (4) a belief that common interests of the group are greater than things which divide. No group or nation has been able to establish and maintain durable peace if any one of these four requirements is lacking.

In practice, effective law is possible only if individuals and groups give up their "right" to arm as they please and to form private armies, and also agree that disputes must be settled peacefully by third party judgement through previously agreed procedures. No one would be allowed to take the law into his own hands.

A peaceful world, on this intermediate model, already has a great reservoir of good people and goodwill. The degree of justice is improving in most places within nations, and injustice between nations is not

the major danger to world peace. The common interests of all mankind to survive by preventing nuclear war greatly exceeds those things that divide the peoples of the world.

On the other hand, we have no effective law against murder and robbery by nations. No requirement prevents nations from arming as they please, arming with weapons of mass destruction, and using these arms as they please. No one agrees to submit all disputes for decision by impartial third parties under previously agreed procedures and to abide by these decisions. Under these conditions war is almost certain, just as it would be if all law were eliminated from our communities.

What is desperately needed is a commitment to abolish international war as any accepted way to protect national interests and settle disputes. A possible way would be to create a World Security Treaty. This treaty would provide for verified arms reductions and an international code of conduct. An agreement to settle all international conflicts peacefully through established procedures would be a necessary part of this treaty. Rechanneling a portion of the money saved by reducing national arms would help the developing nations; economic cooperation would benefit the United States, as well as other nations.

This World Security Treaty would replace the present war machines. Nations now depending upon their national armed strength for security would move to a new World Security System based on law, peacefully enforced.

It would take a number of years and firm resolve to rid mankind of the probability of nuclear destruction. But for the first time in history, no nation can win anything—wealth, power, or prestige—in a large scale nuclear war. There will be no winners. All will die together. For the first time in history, self-interest is best served by replacing international war with a durable world peace with security.

NEXT LESSON: MOVING TOWARD A PEACEFUL WORLD

BIBLE LESSON

Zechariah 4:4-7 "And I said to the angel who talked with me, 'What are these, my lord?'"

5 "Then the angel who talked with me answered me, 'Do you not know what these are?' I said, 'No, my lord.'

6 "Then he said to me, 'This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts.'

7 "What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain; and he shall bring forward the top stone amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to it.' "

Matthew 5:43-45 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

44 "But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

45 "so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."

BACKGROUND

The passage from Zechariah refers to the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem after the return of the Jewish exiles from Babylon. The rebuilding of the temple was a part of the reestablishment of the exiled Jews in their homeland, where they could live in peace and safety.

The passage from the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew includes the beatitude "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Did the Jewish exiles, returning from Babylon, have enough military power to defend themselves against the hostile peoples that surrounded the destroyed Jerusalem?
2. Can human beings, without Divine help, really love their enemies?
3. What changes in human attitudes are necessary to prevent nuclear war?
4. How can these changed attitudes be implemented in human behavior and political policy and structure?

5. Has the huge stockpile of nuclear weapons in the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. reduced terrorism in the world anywhere, or is the threat of terrorism increasing? Would a system of world justice and law help to control terrorism?

COMMENTARY

Just as the Jewish exiles needed to build a new Jerusalem on the desolate ruins of the old in order to survive, so human beings must transform a world based on recurring wars and hatred into one based on durable peace and goodwill if human beings are to survive in a nuclear world.

In last week's lesson, we said that the requirements for durable peace are:

1. Good people and goodwill.
2. Enough justice to make conditions tolerable for most people.
3. Law, enforced by courts and civilian police.
4. We must share the belief that common interests of the group are greater than the things which divide us.

In practice, effective law is possible only if individuals and groups give up their "right" to arm as they please and form private armies. They must also agree that disputes must be settled peacefully by third party judgement through previously agreed procedures. No one is allowed to take the law into his own hands.

We also outlined a basic World Security Treaty as a goal, which if achieved and implemented could make international war and atomic destruction very much less likely.

At the best, a conference to reach agreement on such a Treaty will not convene in the next five years, and agreement might take ten more years. In the meantime, what steps should be taken to reduce the danger of a nuclear war?

The major dangers of war are twofold. The first is war between the United States and the Soviet Union, more likely through accident or escalation from conflicts in such places as Central America or the Middle East. The second area comes from the growing number of nations who will acquire atomic weapons unless the present trend is reversed. Steps should be taken to reduce both dangers.

To reduce the danger of war between the United States and the

Soviet Union, two courses of action are needed. The first is to build greater goodwill and understanding between the two peoples. Their common interests in peace and survival and in prevention of other nations' getting atomic weapons are far greater common interests than those interests which divide us. Neither we nor they can gain from establishing military rule over other peoples. Our experience in Viet Nam and their experience in Afghanistan are ample proof. Neither of us can impose our economic system on other peoples with mutual satisfaction. Further, communism, as an economic system, has proved a failure. The developing world knows that this failure is true in the Soviet Union, and that China is moving toward free enterprise. Communism, as a dictatorial political system, also is much less attractive than freedom. Therefore, we certainly have no valid reason to attempt to destroy Soviet communism by military power, and they should have good enough judgment not to try to destroy ours in a war in which they also will die.

As could be expected from a people that lost at least 20,000,000 dead in World War II—one from almost every family—the Soviet people do not want another such war. They fear us just as we fear them, because either could destroy the other completely, and just might do so. Certainly the injunction to "love our enemies" applies here. Many Christians live in Russia. We should build contacts and establish friendship and goodwill, both on religious grounds and as a practical way by which both peoples can survive.

In addition to building ties of goodwill, we need to make war less likely by reaching agreements between governments. The first step would be to stop the arms race. The proposal for a freeze on nuclear weapons, widely supported in the United States and elsewhere, and accepted in principle by the Soviet Union, is an essential first step. Other agreements to reduce armaments, such as withdrawing them from the border between East and West Germany, would also reduce the danger of war.

What should be done to reduce the danger of other nations' gaining atomic weapons? A very important step would be for all nations to adopt a treaty banning all *testing* of nuclear weapons. If nations did not test, they could not know whether they had reliable weapons. A good treaty to ban testing is, in fact, presently being worked upon. A nuclear non-

proliferation treaty is already in effect, and the Soviet Union abides by it most of the time. This treaty could be further strengthened.

There are many other useful intermediate steps while the process of reaching the goal of a World Security Treaty is under way. Needed is the will on the part of peoples and governments to take these steps. They must cease to depend on "power and might" for peace and security and come to depend on "My Spirit," which is the spirit of God implemented through love, justice, and law.

NEXT LESSON: FAITH INTO ACTION

BIBLE LESSON

James 2:18, 22 "But some one will say, 'You have faith and I have works.' Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works, will show you my faith.

22 "You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by works."

Ezekiel 22:30 "And I sought for a man among them who should build up the wall and stand in the breach before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none."

Matthew 10:34 "Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword."

Hebrews 12:3-4 "Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.

4 "In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood."

BACKGROUND

James 2:18, 22 shows that faith and action go hand in hand. One is empty without the other; but together, faith leads to greater action and action leads to greater faith.

Ezekiel 22:30 refers to a time when the people of the land acted wrongfully and selfishly to other people. God could not find even one person to stand and represent himself to the people.

Religious traditions and laws of that time were strict, as was the family social structure. In context, Matthew 11:34 indicates that if one had to break with this tradition and structure to follow the Lord, then one could be put at odds with family and society.

Hebrews 12:3-4 admonishes one to consider Jesus. He taught the peace, the love, and the forgiveness of God, and he ran into much opposition doing so. The road to peace will not be easy or simple.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. During his ministry, Jesus had to deal with opposition and false accusation from religious leaders. At the same time, he had to continue to love, to heal, and to teach. How do you believe Jesus would see, feel, and act in dealing with the present nuclear arms situation?

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2. On the extremes, some people feel that everything about world security should be *left to* politicians and professionals; some feel that the politicians and professionals must be *prodded by the public* into making the correct decisions. What are your views and how should they help or hinder what you would do for the prevention of nuclear war?
3. What are some ways that you can put your faith into action for world security?
4. What will you do for world security by the final lesson next week?

COMMENTARY

We often bounce back and forth between *wanting* to do good and *wondering* how much good it will do. Two thoughts come to mind. First, if we do nothing, we will surely have no effect. Second, God does not call us to be successful but rather to be faithful. There are certainly things that can be done in our everyday lives. Suggestions can be found almost everywhere (even beyond the series of these lessons). We never know when our faithfulness to act will be rewarded, and we must act or we need not expect a reward for action.

One individual can make a difference in many ways. He can pray, seek faith and wisdom, and learn to love as God loves. This includes loving all people, good and bad, Jew and Gentile, American and Soviet, but does not include loving the sin and evil that these people might do. (This is like loving our children, but not letting them get by with something wrong.) It means being transformed by faith and love and putting this faith and love into transforming the rest of the world.

An individual can become informed. Books are available on nuclear war, wastes, weapons, and the effects thereof. He can attend meetings and get on national and local mailing lists. Thereby he is trying to understand all sides of an issue, and to be open to new information which might change his opinion.

On a person-to-person basis, he can talk with friends and neighbors. It is surprising how many people would like to either do something, or to support in different ways those who *are* doing something. Sometimes just a conversation with such people can inspire ideas and actions.

Within a community, meetings and projects can be put together around specific themes such as nuclear weaponry, wastes, or moral

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issues. Church and civic groups can sponsor a nuclear awareness day. Radio, television, and newspapers can be asked to run articles or interviews and to run free public service announcements for events. Letters to the editor also make an impact on public opinion. Groups can be formed to keep up to date on nuclear issues and to make information available to the public.

Nationally, a concerned person can write the President and congress-people. Senators and Representatives keep track of phone calls and usually try to answer letters. As few as 50 letters can determine how our representatives will vote on legislation. National networks such as Friends Committee on National Legislation and SANE have newsletters and projects on a regular basis.

It has taken since the 1940's for the nuclear arms race to get to its present state. It has not happened all at once, but rather bit by bit with a few big leaps here and there. The road to security concerning nuclear weapons will probably be the same bit-by-bit process. We must prepare to run the peace race with patience, knowing that there is nothing to be gained through nuclear war and everything to be gained through a secure peace.

NEXT LESSON: THE WHOLE PICTURE

BIBLE LESSON

Luke 10:27 "And he answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.'"

II Timothy 2:15 "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."

Philippians 2:12-13 "Therefore, my beloved; as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling;

13 "for God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure"

Hebrews 12:1-2 "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us,

2 "looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith."

BACKGROUND

Luke 10:27 gives the great commandments to love God and neighbor. In loving God, we open ourselves to be taught and led into loving as God loves. This love gives, forgives, goes down to the lowest, darkest, most shameful places, and does not keep score on injury or injustice. In loving thy neighbor "as thyself," we must realize how we love ourselves, and then love others likewise.

II Timothy 2:15 tells us to become skilled workers who do quality work that will pass close inspection. Just as it takes study and practice to do this, so also it takes study and practice to discern and present that which is true.

As we seek to love and do the will of God, the Spirit might lead us into new areas of faith and practice. In this leading, *Philippians 2:12-13* tells us to be faithful and to use care in working out these parts of our salvation.

Hebrews 12:1-2 presents the image of a long, tiring, cross-country footrace. Such a race would be run with little or no excess baggage or burden. The mountains, valleys, rivers, and difficulties of the race must

be negotiated with patience; endurance and determination count as much as speed. The race begins and ends with Jesus.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How can we love a neighbor who does not love us in return, especially if that neighbor would use violence to settle disputes?
2. The Scriptures, the leading of the Spirit, and the circumstances are three sources to seek for the will of God. What are some other sources, and how can these work together to teach us peacemaking?
3. Some people who work for peace have resorted to actions and confrontations that were violent, destructive, or unlawful. Can you recall any such actions and how these actions were consistent or inconsistent with the teachings of Jesus?
4. Do you know of one or more people who feel a leading or an active interest in world security? How are you willing to help or support these people?

COMMENTARY

Thus far in this series, we have discussed various aspects of peace. We have examined some of the present situation, and we have a vision of the future.

We began by defining peace itself. When we talk about "peace of mind," we refer to peace on a personal and inner level. This peace, or harmony, is between an individual and something else—it may be with creation, other people, or with God, and it is a feeling of oneness.

Social and public peace, however, are established on the basis of law to settle conflicts non-violently within groups of people or between nations. It is not as deep or as unlimited as spiritual peace, but it does restrain evil actions and allows individuals to aspire and flourish. Such a peace requires (1) a moral and practical incentive, (2) a sense of common interest, and (3) a framework for law and order.

The Old Testament story of the formation of the Hebrew nation gives a Biblical basis for public peacemaking. In fact, the transformation from unlimited retaliation into law, later enhanced with trust and love taught by Jesus, carries us from the Old Testament into the New

Testament.

The Quaker Peace Testimony is as old as the Society of Friends. It seems that peacemaking was an attribute of every prominent Quaker. One of the clearest and most popular examples is the life of William Penn. His Quaker experiment in Pennsylvania dealt not only with conflict resolution but also with prevention and justice as well.

Could a nuclear war happen? Even with Christian and Biblical mandates for peacemaking, wars do happen. From a moral standpoint, wars have always been senseless. The suffering that is caused by war is absorbed by Christ, for he said, "As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me." The state of the arms race today has made war senseless not only from a moral viewpoint but also from a practical viewpoint. There would be no winners.

If deterrence by fear is not practical, then perhaps war can be deterred by friendship. Remember the requirements for public peace? (1) A moral and practical incentive (we certainly have that), (2) a sense of common interest (this exists and can be enlarged by our unbounded knowledge and creativity), and (3) a framework for law and order (again, we can strengthen global networks and international organizations).

Do we have a vision? How can we build a world where disputes are settled non-violently? One plan presented in Samuel R. Levering's book, *How Can Nuclear War Be Prevented?*, proposes the establishment of a World Security Treaty. Any plan, however, must initiate urgent and immediate short term steps. Also, any plan for arms reductions must consider the problems of the poor and the underdeveloped third of the world.

In building the peaceable kingdom we must understand that almost everyone wants security. People will have differing opinions on how to be secure. They have rights to those opinions, and they need to be loved regardless of those opinions. We have the great commandments to love God and each other. We know the importance of study and preparation. Getting results will require work, dedication, and patience. And this process has already begun.

Let us seek to love God from whom we receive guidance and the example of Jesus. Let us seek to love each other as together we seek security. Let us further put our love into action with the study, work and

dedication that is needed to bring about that peaceable kingdom.

*NEXT LESSON: GOD WILL BE TEACHING THE NEXT LESSONS
THROUGHOUT THE WEEKS AHEAD.
PLEASE PAY ATTENTION.*